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THE

WEYHILL GHOST,

A Tale.

THE

WEYHILL GHOST,

A Tale,

FOUNDED ON FACT,

IN FOUR CANTOS,

WITH SOME SMALLER PIECES.

BY MY PEN.

I am no cormorant for fame, d'ye see,
I ask not all the laurel, but a sprig;
Then hear me, guardians of the sacred tree,
And stick a leaf or two about my wig.

Peter Pindar.

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PREFACE.

Confidence in the indulgence of the Public, and not the merit of the following pages, alone induced the Author to commit them to the press.

THE

WEYHILL GHOST.

CANTO THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

Kersey's Arrival at the Inn.—His Reception.—Want of Accommodation.—The Remonstrance.—The Apology.—He accepts the Ostler's Bed, and retires.—His Reflections on the Advantage attendant on a Knowledge of Trade.—His first Sleep.—The Night-Mare.—His Dream.—His perturbed State on waking.—The Ghost's first Appearance.—Kersey's Horror and Prayer.—His second Sleep.—The Ghost's second Appearance and Departure.

CANTO THE FIRST.

A CLOTHIER, of establish'd fame,
That is, with a reputed name
Of dealing fair, with foe or brother,
Not cheating more than any other,
Arriv'd at Weyhill rather late,
And thunder'd at the Greyhound gate:
The landlord and his wife well knew
The customer they had in view;
(One, who, for twenty years at least,
Had order'd oft a splendid feast,

Of turtle, venison, foul, and fish,
And every rich expensive dish,
With wine enough to wet the gills
Of customers, who paid their bills,
Yet, though to treat so very willing,
'Tis said, it cost him not a shilling;
Six bargains made, just after eating,
Left him a gainer by the treating;)
The landlord smil'd, express'd his pleasure,
The wife, too, join'd the welcome measure.
" Pray, sir, walk in, the ev'ning's damp,
" This pavement, too, may cause the cramp;
" Suppose you take a drop of brandy,
" It's on the shelf here, nice and handy:"
He nods consent, the liquor sips,
It warm'd his heart, it pleas'd his lips.

Says Kersey, " Let my horse be fed,
" And pray secure my usual bed,
" Then send to me the chamber-maid."—
She comes, she curtsies, is afraid
There's not a room, in all the inn,
That she could dare to lodge him in;
Each bed bespoke, a week at least,
By parties to the fair and feast;
But, if he pleased, she had no doubt,
She could procure a good one out:
To this proposal not inclin'd,
For reasons of a weighty kind,
He thus attack'd the landlord's wife,—
" Why, Mrs. Ruddy, on my life,
" I cannot think this usage right,
" To wish to turn me out to night;

" I, who, for twenty years, declare,
" Have never miss'd a single fair?"
" Good, sir, I trust that you'll believe,
" That I myself most sorely grieve;
" The chamber-maid I'd bid beware,
" To keep for you a room to spare.
Thus timely sooth'd, by fibs a score,
He beg'd to hear not one word more,
But straight herself to bed retire,
And he'd make shift before the fire,
Stretch on the rug his weary frame,
And soundly sleep, till morning came.
She quitted:—in came Mr. Ruddy,
Whose brains, not like his wife's, so muddy,
Proffer'd a room, plac'd o'er the stable,
(Yet kept as clean as hands were able):

The Ostler's gone to buy a beeve,
Who'd not return, till next night's eve.
The sound with rapture, Kersey greets,
Smelling the comfort of clean sheets,
Orders that instant up a light,
And to the Landlord bows good night.
Kersey in bed,—but sleep refusing,
He set his fertile mind to musing,
How he should sell his merchandize,
Wishing to meet more fools than wise;
Thought of the 'vantage to be made,
By *him*, who understood the trade,
Who knew the worth of ev'ry piece—
Could tell with certainty the fleece
Of which each texture was compos'd,
And, if for sale, before expos'd,

Knew ev'ry blemish, by mere feeling,—
In short, was an adept in dealing;
Then reckon'd up his own great store,
The cost, the carriage, and what more
It stood him in, besides the treating,
For moth-eat cloths too, what the beating,
(A very honest way of cheating,)
As well as charges for new dressing,
With the etcetra of fresh pressing:
This settled, he began to chuckle,
How well he was prepared to truckle;
Had just declar'd his goods were cheap,
When Somnus seal'd his eyes with sleep.
He scarce had slept (the clock if counted)
Five minutes, ere a night-mare mounted,
Which sat so heavy on his chest,
His heart could scarcely heave his breast;

The form, a searcher from the docks,
His fetter'd soul with terror shocks,
And causes such a frightful dream,
He tries, but only tries, to scream;
He hears the words,—" Last exportation
" Will for your body bring damnation."
He wakes; the big drops wet his face,
And rapidly each other chace;
His fever'd brain with horror shrunk,
And shiv'ring ague shook his trunk;
He thinks he sees the sprite still hov'ring,
And hides his head beneath the cov'ring,
Afraid to trust his doubted sight
To see how near to morning light,
Lest the foul fiend should yet be there,
To blast him with a fury's glare.

After some time he'd pass'd in pray'r,
Which sooth'd his mind, dispell'd despair,
His head—right cautiously he rais'd,
And round the room he wildly gaz'd;
When, lo, an object met his sight,
As giant tall, and rob'd in white,
At the bed's foot he took his stand,
And bore a light in either hand.
Thrice, the raven's funeral note
Issued from his rugged throat:
He thrice, from out a leathern sheath,
Drew forth an instrument of death,
Then thrice, 'twas pointed to his throat,
And thrice again, the raven's note;—
Thrice he paced the creaking floor,
Then left the room, and clos'd the door.

Kersey, of life almost bereav'd,
So near, his bosom scarcely heav'd,
While death-like sweats, from ev'ry pore,
Proclaim'd the agony he bore.
His shiv'ring frame, from top to toe,
Sad witness of his inward woe,
His state of mind may well be guess'd,
But cannot truly be express'd.
Again, he sought relief in pray'r,
And wish'd him safe from Weyhill Fair;
Wonder'd an exportation trick
Should cause such anger from Old Nick;
Promis'd the crime he'd ne'er repeat,
Nor ever more a searcher cheat;
No moth-eat cloths he'd now send down,
Nor sell a piece in all the town;

And vow'd, if granted was his pray'r,
He'd ever after deal right fair.
Fatigu'd in body and in mind,
To slumber, now, he felt inclin'd,
Yet, ere he sought again repose,
The door he'd fain securely close,
To keep the ghost from coming in,
To frighten with his ghostly grin.
Alas! no bolt nor lock was found,—
But, the rude bedstead wheel'd around,
And, plac'd against the chamber-door,
Promis'd, at least, a QUIET *snore*.
With trembling limbs he sought his bed,
To rest his weary—aching head.
After much twisting and much turning,
Alternate cold and fever burning,

Somnus, again, his sceptre sway'd,
And sound to sleep his subject laid.
He had not long resum'd his reign,
Ere the gigantic ghost again,
With all his strength, forc'd ope the door,
Which made the bedstead track the floor,
Whose rumbling casters *cast* a sound,
As though a ghost were under ground,
Bidding the wretched man to rise,
And view his fire-flaming eyes.
The whirl, the sound, poor Kersey shook,
He started—cast a frighted look;
When, lo, the ghost, just as before,
EXCEPT HIS GARMENTS STAIN'D WITH GORE,
Appear'd, erect and smiling stood,
His murd'rous weapon dy'd in blood,

A heart, fresh bleeding from the breast,
His left hand by the pipe compress'd;
Its pulse yet beat, as though for life,
It still would struggle with the knife;
The warm blood dropping on the floor,
(His hands, on entering, mark'd the door.)
Thrice, as before, the raven's note,
Issued from his guggling throat;
Thrice he the weapon rais'd on high,
Then wip'd it on his brawny thigh;
Thrice he bow'd, and thrice he smiled,
With aspect hideous and wild,
Pointing the weapon to his throat,
And screaming forth a death-like note,
Which seem'd to indicate—this warning
Will be fulfill'd before the morning:

" Beware,—beware,—I've fix'd your doom,"
The heart display'd, then left the room.
The winding staircase, as he trod,
Groan'd underneath its *spritely* load;
The clothier sunk, *cloth'd* in despair,
And for a time I'll leave him there,
To pay a visit to the fair.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

CANTO THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

Fair-Morning.—The Fair begun.—A Description of its Exterior.—The Haberdasher's Shop.—The Toy-Shop.—The first Vice repressed.—Greetings in the Market-Place.—Return to the Inn.—Kersey risen.—His Terror on surveying his Chamber.—The Consternation of the Hearers at the Relation of the Night's Adventure.—*Its Truth confirmed.*—The Alarm spread to the Town.—The Closing of the Fair in consequence.

CANTO THE SECOND.

Scarce had the sun his rays put forth,
When, from the east, west, south, and north,
A merry multitude were seen,
Who crown'd the hills and deck'd the green,
Bedizen'd in their Sunday gear,
Replenish'd only once a year;
Replenish'd at the autumn fair,
To which the country round repair.
The lasses, dress'd in ribbons gay,
As flowers in prolific May,

Smiling consent to faithful swain,
Who, simply, wish'd they were not twain,
As they might then their wants provide
Much cheaper than at Whitsuntide,
The time on which they'd fix'd to wed,
And join for life in board and bed;
For farmers deem those children fickle
Who wed between the scythe and sickle.
Near nine o'clock, the fair begun,
(The reign of frolic, mirth, and fun,)
Music of all sorts strike the ears,
And beef-eaters display their spears,
The canvas paintings let you know
What may be seen in ev'ry show;
The royal Tiger, noble Lion,
An Ostrich that would gobble iron,

The Elephant, with trunk so pliant
(Would lift an infant or a giant,)
Would pick your pocket at your pleasure,
And then restore the stolen treasure,
Would take from off the keeper's brow
His hat, and make a courtly bow;
The Kangaroos, and monstrous Cranes,
Which ev'ry clown, with ell-wide jaws,
View'd, with a gape, as though (to me)
They came to eat, and not to see.
The players now attract the crowd;
There's a fine actor, *he*, so loud,
His voice you'd hear at least a mile,
I saw him play, in *such* a stile,
Three characters in half the morn,
Besides thrice singing of the "Storm,"

I pledge my word (depend upon't)
That he, my friend, made *nothing* on't.
The next allurements were the shops,
With ribbons, powder, soap, and strops,
Well stock'd, the eye and heart to win,
And take the lads and lasses in:
Here, scented tooth-powder and brushes,
There, virgin-white and maiden's blushes:
" Oh, sister, what a charming stall,
" Eh! don't you wish we had 'em all:
" I'll have this ribbon, I'll have that;
" See here's a pretty tasty hat;
" Why, here's some powder for the face;
" Pray, what's the price of this sweet lace."
The stalls, with gingerbread and toys,
The gazer's mind some time employs,

Where may be seen, in infant eyes,
The seeds of envy early rise.
Poverty's child, with thumb in mouth,
And hanging head and gait uncouth,
View'd ev'ry toy, on ev'ry shelf,
Which fill'd with joy the little elf,
Who seem'd contented with the sight,
Nor wish'd beyond his then delight;
Until advanc'd a fav'rite boy,
Who pick'd and chose from ev'ry toy,
Bought whips, a horse, a cart, a spade,
For which his wealthy father paid.
The observing child, ey'd horses, cart,
And envy straight assailed his heart;
(A vice it had not known before,
A vice, 'tis hop'd, 'twill ne'er know more;)

He turn'd aside, then heav'd a sigh,
Cast, through a tear, a longing eye,
As from the stall the fav'rite boy,
Elated, took each purchas'd toy.
A kindly heart, who'd watch'd the whole,
Observ'd the workings of his soul,
Dry'd up the tear, the vice repress'd,
And set his infant heart at rest.
Now, through the fair, such friendly greeting,
Friends, neighbours, and relations, meeting:
" Well, sister! mother! where be dad?"
" I've left him, with th' brother, lad,
" At *Angel*, like a *Devil* drinking,
" And at the blithesome widow winking:"
" Why, feyther's gamesome, I declare."
" Yes, always is at Weyhill Fair;

" Aye, always, whether drunk or sober,
" Which makes un long for brisk October."*
" That's brave; but, mother, we be going
" To see what's to be seen worth shewing."
" Well Tummas, so be Bess and I,
" So good by Tummas; Sal, good by."
With leave, kind sirs, I'll leave the fair,
And to the inn again repair,
To see how things have gone on there.
The sun, in vain, shot forth a ray,
To warn our hero it was day;
Nay, not the fair's infernal din,
Nor all the bustle of the inn,
Could raise him from his torpid state,
To learn his dread impending fate.

* The month the Fair is held.

The landlord, with a thund'ring knock,
Proclaim'd the time, (near ten o'clock,)
He woke, he trembled, rubb'd his eyes,
He found 'twas late, essay'd to rise,
But yet, scarce trusting to his sight,
His fear still fancy'd it was night.
At length, he ventur'd from his nest,
In body and in mind distress'd:
With fault'ring step, he pac'd the room,
His face bespeaking inward gloom;
And, as each corner he survey'd,
He trembl'd more—was more afraid;
When, on the spot the ghost had stood,
He saw the drops of undry'd blood,
He swiftly darted for the door,
And that, too, found fresh wet with gore;

Then, down the stairs he rush'd with speed,
And feebly scream'd,—"A deed! a deed!"
Exhausted, sunk upon the ground,
The host and servants gather'd round,
And gently rais'd their fainting guest,
Whose bosoms throb, its grief confess'd,
Then led him in, with greatest care,
And near the fire placed a chair.
Recover'd from his frighted state,
He beg'd his story to relate,
Of all the scenes that struck his sight,
During the whole of yesternight.
They listen'd; each with fear grew cold,
And not a heart was found so bold,
The haunted bed-chamber to view,
To see if what they'd heard was true,

Until, a brave undaunted tar,
Whose valour shone through many a scar,
With glee the mission undertook,
To search each corner, creek, and nook,
And forthwith make a true report,
If Kersey'd been of dreams the sport.
The stairs he mounted, with despatch,
And boldly lifted up the latch;
He enter'd—started back—went on,
And found, at least, the ghost was gone;
But, when he saw the blood-stain'd floor,
And bloody hand-mark on the door,
He certain was, from what he'd seen,
A real ghost had really been,
Told them, 'twas not the mind's dejection,
Which all might know, on bare inspection,

That each could satisfy his mind,
Nor danger dread of any kind.
Encourag'd thus, they quick ascended,
(By him of course to be defended.)
The door thrown open; at one view
They found that what they'd heard was true,
And none his terror could conceal,
Their frighted looks the truth reveal;
Friends, strangers, servants, and the host,
Nor think, nor speak, but of the ghost.
The story spread from inn to town,
To maiden, magistrate, and clown,
'Gainst ev'ry wall, gainst ev'ry post,
Disputes were heard about the ghost;
Thousands declar'd, nay, thousands swore,
They'd seen the finger-marks on door,

The spot whereon the ghost had stood,
With three-and-twenty drops of blood.
Such was the terror of the tale,
Each lass grew faint, each lad grew pale;
Through all the fair reign'd nought but gloom;
And village beauties lost their bloom.
Look to the left, look to the right,
They dare not, fearful of the sprite;
While, to decrease the people's fears,
No ghost in any play appears;
Macbeth and Hamlet, Shakspeare's boast,
Were both perform'd without a ghost;
In short, to tell at once the truth,
Soon shut each shop, each shew, each booth;
Amusements all became suspended,
And for a time the fair was ended.

END OF THE SECOND CANTO.

CANTO THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

The Confusion at the Inn.—The Dinner spoiled.—The Complaint.—The Excuse.—The Guests Reflections on the alleged Cause.—The Resolution to call a Meeting.

CANTO THE THIRD.

THE tumult, as describ'd without,
Not equal'd, at the inn, the rout,
Where each, with fear fill'd to the brim,
Fancy'd the ghost was come for him;
The cook dar'nt lift the copper lid,
She thought a ghost might there be hid,
Or look into a pot or pan,
For fear it should contain a man,
As 'twas said, that ghosts and fairies
Oft had hid themselves in dairies,

Blithe sailing on a sea of milk,
In nutshell boat, with ropes of silk,
Their canvas of Arachne's web,
They constantly at midnight spread;
And then, by luffing, tacking, turning,
Spoil the morrow's look'd-for churning.
Now master, mistress, waiter, maid,
Knew nought they did, nor ought they said;
For, when was rung the cheering bell,
Which told, as plain as tongue could tell,
That ready was a handsome dinner,
As free for saint as 'twas for sinner,
Not e'en the table-cloth was laid,
Which half an-hour the dinner staid;
And, when serv'd up, behold the scene,
At top, no soup, but a tureen;

At bottom, beef, quite done to rags;
The puddings all sent up in bags;
The ducks were boil'd, instead of roast;
The goose, not brown'd, look'd like a ghost;
Rich gravy ooz'd from out a pie,
Which prov'd to be of gooseberry;
A pasty cut, on which those doting
Saw syrup on its surface floating;
A pie, with walls of earthenware,
When opened, caus'd a general stare;
Instead of fowls, or sav'ry sweetbreads,
Eels, alive O, shew'd their neat heads,
Which, *straight, around* the fork *entwin'd,*
Then, o'er the table, serpentin'd,
Escaping, mid the boist'rous cry,
It was, no doubt, the devil's pie;

While all most firmly would believe
Them serpents, such as tempted Eve,
And sent, on purpose, to the fair,
To ruin ev'ry maiden there.
Then, damning waiter, cook, and ghost,
They order'd up the guilty host.
Now, Ruddy, as a turnip *pale*,
And flatter than the flattest ale,
Enter'd the room, with fear and trembling,
(A tree of Aspen much resembling,
Whose boughs bear leaves of agitation,)
But, yet with signs of cogitation,
How he, with grace, should meet the charge,
And, on the subject, how enlarge,
To prove that *he* was not to blame,
And should not lose a worthy name.

Rumfit, the tailor, rose, (distress'd,)
And thus the frighten'd host address'd:
" Landlord, believe, it gives me pain,
" And greatly goes *against the grain*,
" That I should, for my friends, declare,
" Their disappointment at their fare:
" Who ever saw so vile a treat,
" No dish, at table, can be eat;
" Beef, ducks, and fowls, and pork, and mutton,
" Are not, together, *worth a button;*
" *The goose*, at least, is five years old,
" Besides, *it's useless, being cold;*
" That pie, which should have held good fare,
" Had eels; now gone the deuce knows where!"
Ruddy, who'd conn'd a word or two,
Declar'd, he knew respect was due

To all the gentleman had said,
Confess'd the charge was mildly laid,
Hop'd that the gen'ral consternation,
Of which they'd all had information,
Would, in some measure, plead excuse,
For spoiling fowls, ducks, beef, and goose,
As not a soul, the house throughout,
Knew what they each had been about,
Knew what they'd boil'd, or what they'd roast,
Their thoughts so ran upon the ghost;
'Twas that produc'd this sad disaster,
And brought down censure on their master,
For spoiling of so good a dinner,
Caus'd, by some spirit-hunted sinner,
Some inmate, who had travel'd there,
To cheat the buyers at the fair.

Good the excuse, the reason sound,
As so confess'd, by all around,
Who, pardon to the landlord smil'd;
His bow spoke plain, kind sirs, you're mild.
Retiring, thrice he bow'd again,
Which Rumfit said, went *with the grain.*
Now, all recall'd the landlord's words,
Which cut their consciences, like swords;
Each thought himself the greatest sinner,
Who'd caus'd the spoiling of the dinner,
Began to reckon up each crime
Committed, to the present time,
How many maids they'd slyly kiss'd,
How many more they'd try'd, but miss'd,
How oft, to make their profit ample,
They'd sent goods differing from sample,

And, by such *honest* tricks of trade,
The sums of money they had made.
A lawyer counted, much dejected,
Those he had wrongfully ejected;
Those, too, he had in jail for costs,
Enough to raise a hundred ghosts:
To such a pitch was terror come,
It even smote the bailiffs' bum;
Bum bailiff, I should rather sing,
A tender, touching, taking, thing,
By wags, yclep'd, a shoulder-tapper,
Who now, with ev'ry understrapper,
Refus'd an execution levying,
And let goods go without replevying.
The state of Weyhill thus portray'd,
With shut up shops, and loss of trade,

It was agreed, *nem. con.* to call,
Forthwith, a meeting at the hall,
To take into consideration,
How to effect their liberation,
To open shops, restore their trade,
And have the ghost for ever laid.
Straight, hand-bills stuck against each post,
Are headed thus:—A GHOST! A GHOST!
Calling a meeting at the hall,
Of rich and poor, and short and tall,
To consider and adopt some measure,
To bring them trade, and bring them treasure.

END OF THE THIRD CANTO.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

The Meeting. — The Chairman's Address.—Mr. Rumfit's Speech and Proposition.—The Ostler suspected of Murder. — His Apprehension. — The Taunts of the Towns-People —His Examination.—His Address to the Justice. —The Ghost discovered.—The Ostler's Acquittal and Triumph.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

THE hall was full, the meeting there
Forthwith proceed to fill the chair;
A justice chose, who, learn'd in Burn,
They thought was sure to serve their turn;
One who'd root out the crying evil,
And with the ghost would play the devil;
He rose, then, after hemming, ha'ing,
His arm the air the whole time sawing,
As though, as far as he could reach,
He'd cut a passage for his speech;

Said, " Gentlemen, you know the case,"—
Then bow'd,—and then resum'd his place.
The company as mice sat mute,
And inward damn'd the stupid brute;
They thought, no doubt, to shew his pow'r,
He'd speak, at least, for half an hour,
And something, in the end, propose,
The people's sufferings to close;
The Greyhound orator then said,
" As ev'ry one appear'd afraid
" To rise, and give his frank opinion,
" How to detect the devil's minion,
" That he would then propose a plan,
" By which they'd find the guilty man,
" Who'd been by sin and sorrow tost,
" And long tormented by the ghost;

" He knew that some propos'd to pray,
" And thus to drive the ghost away:
" A gentleman from town, he knew,
" Had try'd the plan, it would not do;
" The ghost return'd with hideous stare,
" And snapp'd his fingers at the prayer;
" Others, he knew, had wish'd, he said,
" To have the ghost, by magic, laid,
" By fresh blood drop'd upon the Bible,
" Circles drawn round it;—projects idle,
" As though a ghost could by a spell
" Be bound, but what must come from hell,
" And if from thence you crave assistance,
" Farewell in future to resistance,
" Instead of Ghosts, the least of evils,
" You'll have a brace or two of devils,

" Who'll live, scot-free, in all your houses,
" And play old Harry with your spouses:
" He now requested their attention,
" To something he would briefly mention :—
" Two years ago, a girl, nam'd Lyddy,
" A girl, by all thought monst'rous giddy,
" Liv'd at the Greyhound-inn, with Ned,
" 'Twas thought too, oft had shar'd his bed,
" One morning early she was missing,
" Effects of this unlawful kissing
" Was judg'd the cause, which made her leave
" The town to wonder, Ned to grieve.
" He, with despair, almost went wild,
" Which prov'd him father of the child;
" And, from that moment, up to this,
" Nought has been heard of babe or miss;

" It strikes me, Gentlemen, with force,
" That Ned's the prey of keen remorse,
" That he the guilty maid destroy'd;
" And by her ghost is now annoy'd,
" Who, nightly, at a certain time,
" Appears, a witness of the crime
" Committed, in that very room,
" At midnight's sad and awful gloom:
" The inference from this, no doubt,
" Must be, the murder now is out."
The meeting, then, with great applause,
Agreed that murder was the cause,
That Ned, to all salvation lost,
Murder'd the maid, and rais'd the ghost,
Propos'd, that he should then be sought,
And instantly to justice brought.

Again, applause the people shouted,
That Ned directly should be routed.
A warrant straight was issu'd forth,
And constables sent south and north;
Things were come to such a rum pass,
That to each point of the compass
A constable, in keen pursuit,
Was sent, to apprehend the brute.
About a mile from out the town
They saw the culprit coming down,
Driving, with care, his master's beeve,
With nought on earth his heart to grieve,
He, too, his neighbours soon espy'd,
Mounting the hill, with hasty stride.
Nor did it enter once his thought,
That it was him they eager sought,

So met them with good-natur'd smiles :

" Ah ! Jack, how do : —what, joking Giles ?"

" Don't call me Giles, see what I bring,—

" And now I take you, for the king."—

" What ! me the king ; come, that's good sport :

" You, too, not Giles, but come from court :—

" Ecod, the world's turn'd upside down,

" To carve a king from out a clown,

" A courtier from a cobbler cut,

" And raise a palace from a hut.

" Why ; joking Giles,—man, how you stare,

" You look as mad as any hare."

" It is no joke," said Giles to Ned,

" You straight to justice must be led,

" So says (without explaining further)

" This warrant, for committing murther."

" I know, in all my life," Ned said,
" I never injur'd man or maid,—
" Therefore, am heedless on that score,
" And care not who I'm brought before."
They bind his arms,—and, through the fair,
Quick to the justice's repair.
The mob, now, with a gen'ral shout,
Declare the murderer found out.
" See," cry'd " the crowd, he looks the thief,
" The king himself dar'nt save his beef;
" The rogue, at not a crime would falter,
" His neck seems moulded for the halter."
The rival ostlers taunt with sneers,
And post-boys add their savage jeers;—
" There's honest Ned; yes, Ned so willing
" To rob us of an extra shilling,

" By telling travellers the sum
" We ought to charge from whence we come.
" What, Ned, my lad,—you're sure to swing;
" Yes; you'll find neck and they'll find string.
" Hollo, Ned; yoix,—yoix; lend's a spangle,*
" We'll pay you, boy, the day you dangle.
" For shame, Jem:—come, Ned, never mind,
" You'll bleach, *by hanging in the wind.*—
" It's fair-day now; so, Ned, good by,
" And when you're hung we'll try to cry."
Arriv'd in form the cavalcade,
And proclamation being made,
The justice took the chair in state,
And Ned appear'd to learn his fate.
He thus address'd undaunted Ned,—
" Sirrah, you know the life you've led;

* A Seven shilling-piece.

" A wicked life, without example,
" Of villany a pretty sample;
" Yes, yes; why, now you've been to thieve,
" And stole, no doubt, yon fatted beeve."
" May't please your worship," Ruddy said,
" That beast for me he bought and paid."
" Silence; that alters not the case,—
" There's murd'rer written in his face;
" I'll send him off to jail to night,
" Such rascals should be hung outright;
" His mittimus this instant make,
" The fellow well deserves the stake."
Says Ned, who was a little fuddl'd,
" Your worship's brains are surely muddl'd,
" To think of sending me to prison,
" Because you do not like my wizen;

" If jails were made for ugly folk,
" Your honour would not like the joke;—
" Besides, before I'm sent to jail,
" Pray let me hear, at least, the tale,—
" And know—why I'm not set at large,
" And what against me is the charge."
" Oh, oh! the fellow knows a thing,
" And we, in form, the charge must bring:—
" Here, Mr. Kersey, step this way,
" And swear to all you swore to day."
Kersey, forthwith, the oath he took,
In form, upon the office-book;
The story through again relates,
Not one thing adds—nor one abates.
Six other witnesses were sworn,
To what they'd seen that very morn:—

The landlord, too, that none but Ned
Was e'er allow'd to use the bed.
Ned listen'd with attentive ear,
And countenance devoid of fear;
He paus'd,—then o'er the story travell'd,
And thus the mystery unravell'd.—
" The ghost, why, zounds, there ne'er was one,
" The fancy'd ghost was jobbing John.—
" I promis'd him, at yesternoon,
" If he would call me very soon,
" I'd rise and help him do his work,
" To kill a pig and dress the pork.
" John then agreed, (it was but right,)
" He'd call at two and leave a light.
" Pray send for John, he's close at hand,—
" By signs, he'll make you understand;

" Though DEAF and DUMB, you know the youth
" Would scorn to violate the truth.
" Now, then, a word or two for Lyddy,
" Whose greatest charge is being giddy:
" One night her mistress gave her warning,
" (And Lyddy left the next day morning,)
" For breaking of a china cup,
" In which she'd brought some gruel up
" To me, who had been drench'd with rain,
" And suffer'd from rheumatic pain;
" She call'd the girl a frightful name,
" And threaten'd her with public shame;
" She'd swear before the king, she said,
" That Lyddy'd been with me in bed:
" 'Twas false;—but Lyddy left the place,
" To shun unmerited disgrace.

" She's well—and at her father's home,
" So says this letter, (lately come)."
Thus, Lyddy and himself now clear'd,
The whole assembly loudly cheer'd;
Then, rising, all, with great respect,
Wonder'd how e'er they could suspect
A man, whose visage plainly said,
I'm honest,—therefore, not afraid.
Now, enter'd, tremblingly, poor John,
Who knew not what they'd met upon.
Thrice to the court he bow'd and smil'd,
With *aspect hideous and wild*,
When Kersey, in amazement lost,
Exclaim'd,—" Save, save me from the ghost."
His friends then rais'd him from the floor,
And led him to the outer door;

Meantime, by signs to John is stated,
The story, as before related;
And he, in turn, by signs, is told,
This seeming myst'ry to unfold.
Kersey, recover'd from his fear,
Is brought the history to hear;
By signs, and by a gutt'ral note,
Which issu'd from his fetter'd throat,
He said, as he stood there, 'twas true,
He went to call Ned up at two.
It being then as dark as night,
He, on the table, left a light;
(That Ned look'd up,) then, with his knife,
He pointed, as to take a life,
Which meant to say, " Ned don't lie still,
" But rise, and help the pig to kill."

The room he quitted, went to work,
And kill'd the pig, and dress'd the pork;
When finding Ned not like to come,
He went again up to his room,
To shew, that he had done his part,
And shew his perquisite, the heart,
Which said, as plain as tongue could say,
" You lazy dog, now snore away,
" You've slept all night, so sleep all day;
" You see, your help I've done without,
" Therefore, pray have your slumber out."
Since, then, the truth has come to light,
That Ned had slept from home that night,
That twice, I went to visit Ned,
But call'd the gentleman instead;
And thus, without intending harm,
Have caus'd the town, such dire alarm.

His grief, for which he then express'd,
By striking rapidly his breast,
The court now rose, in transport lost,
And shouted forth, no ghost, no ghost!—
The welcome words ran through the fair,
No ghost,—no ghost,—rend earth and air;
Ostlers and post-boys hide their heads,
By sneaking to their restless beds;
While Ned, the object late of scorn,
Is, through the fair, in triumph borne,
Which soon resum'd its former glory,
And ends this strange eventful story.

END OF THE FOURTH CANTO.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

STEADY TRAVELLING;

A FAST COACH AND SLOW HORSES.

Tip Smiler a flank, come tickle up Dragon,
Then perchance we may go as fast as yon waggon;
Yon waggon, says Whipcord, take back your
reproaches,
On this road, this is counted the *fastest* of
COACHES.
Very true, said the wag, that we all of us know,
But your HORSES, my friend, are most terribly
slow.

NATURE'S COACHMAN AND CHAMBER-MAID;

OR,

MORNING AND EVENING.

FROM the east breaks the morn, that is, Phœbus gets up,
Gives his horses their corn, drinks the dew from his cup,
Mounts his chariot, a lash bids his coursers arise,
And illumine the earth, as they traverse the skies.

At eve, in the west, quite fatigued with his
labour,
He snores in his chariot, which wakes his fair
neighbour;—
When, lo, the chaste Luna pops forth her pale
head,
And lights, O fie, Luna! young Phœbus to bed.

EPITAPH.

The *ups* and *downs* of this World exemplified in the fall of a Java Sparrow, the Property of Mrs. Proctor.

In spite of the doctor,
And good Mrs. Proctor,
Death *up'd* with his arrow,
And *down'd* with a sparrow.

THE CANDIDATE CONFUSED;

OR,

AMEN AT A VENTURE.

A PARISH clerk pro tempore,
His name, I think, was Hermon,
(The parson preach'd extempore,)
Slept most part of the sermon;
But, near the close, he chanc'd to wake,
His soul, on hooks of tenter,
Egad, my credit's now at stake,
So, AMEN, at a venture.

TO MOTH-ANIA,

A Young Lady remarkable for her humanity in affording "Protection to every living Creature."

MOTH-ANIA, gentle goddess, hail!
Protectress of the head and tail
Of ev'ry living creature,
Whether in hair, they cautious crawl,
Or creep along a painted hall,
Exhibiting each feature.

The speckled toad, the agile frog,
The mastiff bold, the sulky hog,
Your kind caresses share;
If after butterflies we race,
You join, right nimbly in the chace,
Their little breaths to spare.

There is, I've heard, in many a house,
An animal, yclep'd a mouse,
Who lives by downright stealing ;
And should they catch the saucy chap,
Forthwith, you free him from the trap,
A sacrifice to feeling.

Nay, should your lovely limbs invite,
A little skipjack flea to bite,—
" Your downy pillow scorning,"
Straight you're as busy as a bee,
To aid the 'scape of monsieur flea,
" While gaily peeps the morning."

MUTUAL PRESENTS.

On a Gentleman presenting his Wife with a Prayer Book and receiving in return a Pocket Edition of Johnson's Dictionary.

Such presents as these proved the pair were discerning,
She wanted religion, and *he* wanted learning.

A PROPHECY.

WHEN peers are poor and poets rich;
And wedlock oft obtains the flitch;
When senators cannot be bought,
And misers look on gold as nought;
When beauties wish their charms to hide,
And coxcombs are devoid of pride;
When pigmies bring forth nought but giants,
And lawyers feast their poorest clients;
When lead's as light as any feather,
And hackney coachmen wish dry weather;

When virgins cease to sigh for marriage,
And ostentation quits its carriage;
When English sailors shun the French,
And parsons scorn to kiss a wench;
When May-flies live beyond a day,
And atheists begin to pray;
When counsellors are short of brass,
And hypocrites neglect their mass;
When summer's heat produces ice,
And cats are scar'd away by mice;
When winter's frost produces heat,
And north winds put us in a sweat;
When fell ambition knows its bounds,
And hares are seen pursuing hounds;
When men of honour break their word,
And Courage fears to draw the sword;

When England's laws can rascals bind,
And ships sail best against the wind;
When comets are eclips'd by rockets,
And prigs give over picking pockets;
When butchers o'er their victims cry,
And tom-tits drink the ocean dry;
When truth pervades Munchausen's tales,
And sprats with ease can swallow whales;
When sloth is seen to make great haste,
And di'monds are surpass'd by paste;
When barbers cease to carry news,
And virtue may be found in stews;
When ignorance is reckon'd merit,
And hen-peck'd husbands shew a spirit;
When watchmen call the hour clear,
And marble's soften'd by a tear;

When nurses fail to chatter scandal,
And Reeve excels the God-like Handel;
When washerwomen cease to drink,
And justice now and then to blink;
When India's cold and Lapland hot,
And ale's not sought for by a sot;
When pity shall oppress the poor,
And tyrants ope the prison door;
When cowards shall deserve the laurel,
And scolding wives shall cease to quarrel;
When statesmen scorn to change their coats,
And England's bank not issue notes;
When parish-officers are mild,
And kindly treat pure Nature's child,
Soothing the sorrows of the mother
And wish she soon may have another;

When doctors never disagree,

And, what's more strange, refuse a fee;

When poverty's preferr'd to riches,

And wives don't long to wear the breeches;

When fertile Nile shall cease to flow,

And jet be whiter far than snow;

When turtle-doves forsake their young,

And ladies learn to hold their tongue;

When love shall flee the gen'rous breast,

And Cuckoos learn to build a nest;

When weak is strong, and strong is weak,

And hunger shuns a smoking steak;

When right is wrong, and wrong is right,

And night is day, and day is night;

When mountains fall and vallies rise,

And earth attempts to kiss the skies;

When patriot's honesty is clear,

What then?

What then? Why, then is Doomsday near.

ROBBING A BIRD'S NEST.

The morn scarcely blushing, the *dew-drop* still
glist'ning,
For the sun had not yet kiss'd the *rose-bud* it
press'd,
And the mate of each songster was anxiously
list'ning
For the warble to call her away from the nest.

The lark-stirring school-boy, his eastern course bending,
Whose keen-prying eyes pierce each brake and each bush;
As the bough of the maple he's cautiously rending,
In search of the nest of a blackbird or thrush.

When, lo, unperceiv'd by the fond mate then twitt'ring
The sweet signal, that said, to the fields now repair,
While near our dear pledges I still will keep flitt'ring,
To deceive, by my flight, those who come to ensnare.

She arose from her nestlings, her cramp'd wings
unfolded;
The sharp-sighted urchin with rapture des-
cry'd,
In his arms he the nest in an instant enfolded,
And bore it away both in triumph and pride.

Yet around the sad spot the fond pair still kept
flutt'ring,
And so plaintively pour'd forth the song of
despair,
That each feeling heart was in unison utt'ring
A sigh for the warblers of sorrow and care.

ON PRESENTING A SPRIG OF SWEET-BRIAR TO MOTH-ANIA.

SINCE you ask for sweetbriar I pry'thee beware,
'Tis an emblem of love, and, like love, has its snare;
Yet accept this small token of Spring's cheering dawn,
Which, like love, has its sweets, and, like love, has its thorn.

TO MOTH-ANIA, ON HER ATTAINING THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN.

SERENE the morn of life appears,
Which through a course of eighteen years,
Without its sorrows, or its cares,
Has run, Mary.

And may the noon, that's coming on,
By far surpass the morning sun,
With which the dawn of life begun
With thee, Mary.

Oh, may no lover's fatal snare,
Furrow thy father's cheek with care,
Nor drive thy mother to despair
For thee, Mary.

But may it be thy fate to find
A youth, like thee, in heart and mind
Congenial, to thy parents kind,
And thee, Mary.

Then, when their eve of life draws nigh,
They will not breathe the heart-felt sigh,
But pleasure beam from either eye,
On him and thee, Mary.

TO MOTH-ANIA,

On the Death of a Female Friend, for whose Loss she was nearly inconsolable.

Repress in thy bosom the heart-rending sigh,
Dispel from thy thoughts the sad gloom;
Affection, though keen, nor the tear-brimming eye,
Can call thy fair friend from the tomb.

'Twas the God of great mercy that snatch'd her away,
Then grieve not for one that's so blessed;
'Tis a summons we all should with rapture obey,
For the grave is a passport to rest.

Cheer, cheer, thee, dear maid, let not canker-
worm care
Ne'er corrode thy fond heart without guile;
To the dead 'tis a tribute to shed the soft tear,
But the living lay claim to a smile.

THE KING'S EVIL RADICALLY CURED.

A farmer's son possessing skill,
How ev'ry sort of soil to till,
Knew how to choose the purest stock,
And with advantage rear a flock;
Consulted by his neighbours round,
On which were rotten—which were sound;
Belov'd, throughout his native village,
By ev'ry healthful son of tillage;
Cheerly he labour'd all day long,
And troll'd at night the jocund song,—

The loves of Giles and Joan he chaunted,
And finish'd with the Castle Haunted.
A dashing cousin, gay from town,
Came with a shooting-party down,
His bucks and bloods in beau's attire,
Set the indust'rous youth on fire;
All night he dreamt of nought but London,
Where many country youths are undone;
Hinted to cousin to invite him,
And beg'd to that effect he'd write him.
The moment that he got to town,
Receipt of which he'd instant own,
Accept his pressing invitation,
To view the city of the nation.
The letter comes, he gains consent,
And quits the home of sweet content;

Arrives, is fitted out with clothes,
The fashionable cut of beaus;
Frog'd coat, WARS overalls, and full-furr'd vest,
Of *fools* the study and of *wits* the jest;
Wears whiskers to his mouth's moist brink,
For vermin to come down to drink;
With ass-shod heels and chains of jack,
He hunts, by *rote*, in folly's pack,
Yelping, up Bond-Street, *how'd-jee do*,
Or blust'ring, *barking*, who are you?
Striding, midst dancers, dukes, and diddlers,
Footmen, frail females, flats, and fiddlers;
Joins in all scenes of dissipation,
Exhausts the means of liquidation;
Then borrows of his needy friend,
Whose pride induces him to lend,

Sooner than suffer *coz* to know,
That poverty's conceal'd by shew.
The time expir'd, he home returns,
His anxious parent's bosom burns,
To know how he'd improv'd his parts,
By study of the useful arts;
But all that alter'd Frank could say,
He'd seen an opera and play;
Had view'd each bridge, had seen each dock,
And strike had seen St. Dunstan's clock;
Had seen the lions in the tow'r,
The crown and sceptre, signs of pow'r;
And, last and best of all, had seen,
Our gracious king and gracious queen;
From which so lofty had he grown,
He scarcely to himself was known.

He stalk'd, *en militaire*, the village,
And *cut* the very thoughts of tillage;
Knew not the use of flail or shovel,
And deem'd his father's house a hovel,
Containing not a single thing,
Fit for a man, who'd seen the king.
A farmer gave his arm a jog,
And on his boasting clap'd a clog:
" What! seen the king,—had'st a good view;
" Friend; did his MAJESTY *see you*."
This unexpected interjection,
Caus'd a few moments deep reflection;
He ey'd his coat, furr'd vest and breeches,
The pockets felt, alas, no riches;
Then, turning, thank'd his worthy neighbour,
Doff'd his fine clothes and took to labour.

AN IN-GRATE.

The Author's Address to his Pen, on throwing it into the Fire, after he had written the foregoing Pages.

Go, thou phlegmatic feather'd chit,
Thou little libeller of wit,
You rouse my ire!
But, stop,—one blessing I will grant,—
Of which, I fear, you're much in want,
I'll give thee—FIRE.

THE END.

W. MARCHANT, Printer,
Ingram-Court, Fenchurch-Street.

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